



Trauma Response and the Criminal Justice System: A Virtual Summit on Knowledge, Healing, and Resilience

Trauma of Inmates Returning to the Community

Inmates experience trauma and anxiety when returning to the community. They are often told upon release that they need to find employment and housing; obtain important documents such as birth certificates, State IDs, and drivers' licenses; and address any mental health issues and/or substance abuse addictions. Additionally, they often have a need for food, clothing, shelter, health care, transportation, education and stable housing. Depending on how long that client spent in prison, they do not know how to navigate the systems, let alone do this utilizing modern technology. The Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) Reentry Case Managers address these issues by walking the clients through each process to address these needs. Obtaining some of these needs requires the use of modern technology not to mention dealing with pre-conceived ideas and stigmatism relating to these individuals. A huge number of our clients have stated that "it is better going back to prison than having to deal with these processes". Without the support of the Reentry program, most of our clients would return to the prison system. In this forum, we will address the following processes:

1. Building working relationships with these individuals;
2. Assisting them in locating employment and dealing with employers;
3. Navigating through the paper work; and
4. Locating and becoming engaged in services to address their mental health and/or substance abuse addictions.

Presenters:

Helen Carter-Snell

Helen Carter-Snell has a BA degree in Psychology and a minor in Sociology. She has worked and served the City of Erie in the Social Services field for the past 40 years; including working 5 years at the Martin

Luther King Center in various programs. and 5 years with Perseus House, Inc. as a juvenile counselor and as Assistance Supervisor. She has also worked the past 31 years at the GECAC organization in the Teen Parenting program and various positions in the Area Agency on Aging Department from Assessment Caseworker to Long Term Living Coordinator. She has been the Program Manager of the GECAC ECRSSA program since August 13, 2020.

Jesse Tate

Jesse Tate has a B.A, degree in Sociology and minor in Criminal Justice. Jesse has five years Reentry from the concept and is a success story. Jesse spent 3 years in prison and was blessed to have supports in the community such as parents and other professionals, and the late R. Benjamin Wiley who fought for and assisted Jesse in getting a college degree.

Betty Meeder, BSW, MSW, LSW

Betty Meeder holds a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Social Work. Betty is a Licensed Social Worker in Pennsylvania and has worked in social services for ten years and in the Reentry Program for one year. She has worked in case management, mental health therapy, and substance abuse counseling.

Jordan Teribery

Jordan Teribery has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology with a minor in Gender Studies and a Master's Degree in Criminalistics from Gannon University. Jordan has been working in Reentry since June of 2020.